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Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 CIAE-00 PM-09 INR-10 L-03 NEA-10

NSAE-00 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 GAC-01 USIA-12 TRSE-00

MBFR-03 SAJ-01 IO-12 AEC-11 ACDA-19 OMB-01 H-02

NSC-10 SS-15 RSR-01 /151 W
---------- 055390
R 121905 Z APR 73
FM AMEMBASSY ROME
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8288
INFO SECDEF WASHDC
CINCEUR
USDELMC
USNMR SHAPE
DA
JCS
CINCUSAREUR
USDOCOSOUTH
CG SETAF
USMISSION NATO
AMCONSUL MILAN

S E C R E T ROME 2941

E. O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MARR NATO IT
SUBJECT: PROJECT FENDER

REFS: A. USNMR SHAPE DTG 141700 Z MAR 73
B. STATE 045507 (NOTAL)

1. LETTER TO ADMIRAL HENKE FROM GENERAL GOODPASTER REQUESTING GOI APPROVAL OF DEPLOYMENT OF AIRBORNE BATTALION TO VICENZA, TRANSMITTED BY REF A, HAS FOR PAST FOUR WEEKS BEEN STAFFED BY ITALIAN ARMY AND MINISTRY OF DEFENSE. EMBASSY OFFICER, IN CALL AT FOREIGN OFFICE ON APRIL 11, WAS INFORMED THAT MOD HAD JUST CONVEYED STRONG RECOMMENDATION FOR APPROVAL OF PROPOSAL TO FOREIGN OFFICE. CONCERNED MFA OFFICIAL (DA RIN) SAID THAT
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PROPOSITION MUST NOW BE SUBMITTED TO FOREIGN MINISTER MEDICI AND PRIME MINISTER' S OFFICE FOR POLITICAL APPROVAL. HE ADDED THAT HE WAS IN PROCESS OF PREPARING AFFIRMATIVE RECOMMENDATION BUT WISHED CLARIFICATION ON NUMBER OF POINTS.

2. DA RIN ASKED FOR ADDITIONAL BACKGROUND ON FORMER AMBASSADOR MARTIN' S CONVERSATIONS WITH THEN PRIME MINISTER RUMOR REGARDING THE 1969-70 REDCOSTE PROGRAM AND WHAT WAS DISCUSSED BY WAY OF POSSIBLE COMPENSATORY FUTURE INCREASES (REFERRED TO IN GENERAL GOODPASTER' S LETTER, REF A). DA RIN ALSO INQUIRED AS TO WHETHER THE U. S. HAD CONSIDERED THE BATTALION DEPLOYMENT IN THE LIGHT OF ON- GOING MBFR TALKS. AND FINALLY, HE ASKED WHETHER THERE WAS ANY URGENCY INVOLVED IN THE DEPLOYMENT. IN RESPONSE, EMBOFF REVIEWED REDCOSTE BACKGROUND, DREW ON REF B REGARDING MBFR ANGLE, AND STRESSED DESIRABLILTY OF SECURING GOI APPROVAL BY THE END OF THIS MONTH, SO AS TO PERMIT THE " ESTABLISHMENT OF THE BATTALION AT EDERLE BY AUGUST 31 (APRIL 11 EKERN- DEVINE TELCON), CITING BUDGETARY AND POTEMTIAL POLITICAL PROBLEMS, I. E., MBFR, IF DEPLOYMENT DELAYED MUCH BEYOND THIS DATE. EMBOFF ALSO SUGGESTED THAT GOI MIGHT WISH TO CONSIDER FAVORABLE IMPACT ON AFFIRMATIVE DECISION WOULD HAVE ON WASHINGTON AUTHORITIES IF APPROVAL WERE GIVEN PRIOR TO PRIME MINISTER ANDREOTTI' S UPCOMING VISIT TO WASHINGTON.

3. DA RIN EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR THE INFORMATION PROVIDED AND PROMISED TO EXPEDITE MFA STAFFING OF PROPOSAL, INDICATING THAT HE WOULD STRONGLY ENDORSE THE MOD' S FAVORABLE RECOMMENDATION.

4. ON APRIL 12, WE BROUGHT PRIME MINISTER' S DIPLOMATIC ADVISER (CAGIATI) UP TO DATE ON PROPOSAL AND MADE POINT REGARDING TIMING OF GOI DECISION AGAINST BACKDROP OF ANDREOTTI VISIT. HE GRASPED MESSAGE IMMEDIATELY AND INDICATED HE WOULD LOOK INTO STATUS OF FOREIGN OFFICE STAFFING.

5. COMMENT: BASED ON THE ABOVE, WE ARE REASONABLY CERTAIN OF EVENTUAL GOI APPROVAL OF FENDER. WHILE IT IS POSSIBLE THAT WE MAY EVEN GET INFORMALLY BEFORE ANDREOTTI VISIT, TIMING MAY YET PROVE TO BE A PROBLEM. AT THE RISK OF APPEARING CASSANDRA-LIKE, THERE REMAINS A POSSIBILITY THAT THE GOI WILL ULTIMATELY DECIDE THAT THE DEPLOYMENT SHOULD NOT FOLLOW ON THE HEELS OF ANDREOTTI' S WASHINGTON VISIT. THERE ARE MANY KEY ITALIAN

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OFFICIALS WHO MIGHT WELL ARGUE THAT THE INEVITABLE OUTCRY

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FROM THE LEFT WILL BE MORE TELLING IF IT CAN DEPICT ANDREOTTI
AS HAVING HIS ARM TWISTED IN WASHINGTON WITH THE RESULT THAT
ANOTHER LA MADDALENA IS BEING FOISTED ON THE ITALIAN PEOPLE.
THESE OFFICIALS, WE BELIEVE, WILL RECOMMEND A DELAY OF SEVERAL
MONTHS IN APPROVING THE DEPLOYMENT. WE SHOULD HAVE A BETTER
READING ON WHERE MATTERS STAND IN A FEW DAYS. DEPENDING ON THIS
WILL BE THE TACK WASHINGTON SHOULD TAKE DURING DISCUSSIONS
ON THE SUJBECT DURING ANDREOTTI' S VISIT. VOLPE

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*** Current Handling Restrictions *** n/a
*** Current Classification *** SECRET

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TAGS: MARR, IT, NATO
To: CINCEUR
CINCUSAREUR
DA
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MC
SECSTATE WASHDC

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USNMR SHAPE
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